

Fighting together, moving apart? European common defense and shared security in an age of Brexit and Trump

Initiative: Herausforderungen für Europa

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Projekt-Website: <https://www.mzes.uni-mannheim.de/seceurity/>

The project strives to examine the dynamic relationship between elites and masses in policy-making about common defense in the multi-level European system. Two overarching questions lie at the heart of the project: what and how do elites and European mass publics think about greater (European) defense, security, and military integration? More specifically, the project wants to achieve the following objectives: (1) study what mass publics and security elites understand by "common defense", (2) estimate the level of public support or opposition to a vast array of possible forms of defense integration across Europe, including assessing support for some form of European military, (3) explore differences in citizen perceptions and preferences across regions within the EU, (4) identify individual-level values, predispositions, attitudes, and demographic factors that shape support or opposition to defense integration, (5) examine how elite cues, social cues, and real-world events affect defense integration attitudes, (6) analyze the interplay of media content, individual media exposure, and mass opinion towards European defense and security integration, and (7) evaluate how (and how accurately) elites perceive mass opinion toward European defense and security integration, and vice versa. The project combines qualitative (elite interviews) and quantitative research (surveys with embedded experiments and media content analysis) to examine what factors affect European security policy preferences. The primary focus lies on France, Germany, Italy, and Great Britain, four countries that will play important roles in European defense integration.

Projektbeteiligte

Prof. Dr. Harald Schoen

Universität Mannheim
Mannheimer Zentrum für
Europäische Sozialforschung (MZES)
Mannheim

Prof. Dr. Pierangelo Isernia

Università degli Studi di Siena
Department of Social, Political and
Cognitive Science
Siena
Italien

Prof. Dr. Thomas Scotto

University of Strathclyde
Government and Public Policy
Politics
Glasgow
Grossbritannien

Prof. Dr. Jean Joana

University of Montpellier I
Political Science
Montpellier Cedex 2
Frankreich

Dr. Catarina Thomson

University of Exeter
Department of Politics
Exeter
Grossbritannien

Prof. Dr. Martial Foucault

Science Po
Political Science
CEVIPOF (UMR CNRS 7048)
Paris
Frankreich

Dr. Filip Ejodus

University of Belgrade
Faculty of Political Sciences
Belgrade
Serbien

Dr. Bogdan Mihai Radu

Universitatea Babes-Bolyai
Faculty of Political, Administrative
Department of Political Science
and Communication Sciences (FSPAC)
Cluj-Napoca
Rumänien

Dr. Matthias Mader

Universität Mannheim
Fakultät für Sozialwissenschaften
Fachbereich Politikwissenschaft
Lehrstuhl für Politische Psychologie
Mannheim

Prof. Dr. Theresa Kuhn

University of Amsterdam (UvA)
European Studies Department
Amsterdam
Niederlande

Dr. Seiki Tanaka

University of Amsterdam (UvA)
Political Science
Political Economy and Transnational Governance
Amsterdam
Niederlande

Prof. Dr. Jason Reifler

University of Exeter
Department of Politics
Exeter
Grossbritannien

Prof. Dr. Stephanie Hofmann

The Graduate Institute of International
and Development Studies
International Relations and Political Science
Geneva
Schweiz

Dr. Catherine Hoeffler

Université catholique de Lille
European School of Political and Social Sciences
Lille
Frankreich